



SOCIAL ISOLATION & LONELINESS

Social isolation is when you have few, or even no, close connections or relationships.

Loneliness is a *feeling*. You can be surrounded by people you know but still *feel* alone.



of older Canadians are at risk of being **socially isolated**

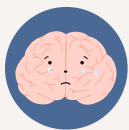
HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Increases risk of premature death as much as smoking up to **15 cigarettes/day**



Increases dementia risk by **~50%** in older adults

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



Loneliness and lack of social contact diminish the brain and increase your dementia risk.



Social interactions can slow or even reverse these brain changes.



Take action now!



HOW CAN YOU TAKE ACTION?

Start with small steps

- Reach out to familiar people, whether that's family, friends, or acquaintances, or go to places that you know
- Gradually, do this more often



Take it offline

- Venture into a store or bank - interact with people in person instead of doing everything online



Work your way up to being more open

- Meet new people, go to new places, and experience new situations
- Take a group class in a subject you love, or volunteer in your community



Everyone has personalized needs. It's important to match your comfort level when choosing activities to increase your social engagement!